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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/560,780	04/28/2000	Kazutoshi Okuno	85761-000510US	5157
20350	7590	10/21/2003		EXAMINER
				KUBELIK, ANNE R
			ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
				1638

DATE MAILED: 10/21/2003

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Offic Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)	
	09/560,780	OKUNO ET AL.	
	Examiner	Art Unit	
	Anne R. Kubelik	1638	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on 11 September 2003.

2a) This action is **FINAL**. 2b) This action is non-final.

3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

4) Claim(s) 1, 4 and 7 is/are pending in the application.

4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.

5) Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.

6) Claim(s) 1, 4 and 7 is/are rejected.

7) Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.

8) Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.

10) The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.

Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).

11) The proposed drawing correction filed on _____ is: a) approved b) disapproved by the Examiner.

If approved, corrected drawings are required in reply to this Office action.

12) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

13) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).

a) All b) Some * c) None of:

1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

14) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application).

a) The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.

15) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121.

Attachment(s)

1) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)	4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). _____
2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)	5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) _____	6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____

DETAILED ACTION

1. The amendments filed 11 September 2003 have been entered. Claims 1, 4 and 7 are pending.
2. The text of those sections of Title 35, U.S. Code not included in this action can be found in a prior Office action.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

3. Claims 1, 4 and 7 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, first paragraph, as failing to comply with the enablement requirement. The claims contain subject matter that was not described in the specification in such a way as to enable one skilled in the art to which it pertains, or with which it is most nearly connected, to make and/or use the invention.

The claims are broadly drawn to a method for identifying field resistance in rice and a method for breeding rice with field resistance, wherein the methods require detecting the presence or absence of the Owarihatamochi allele of the DNA marker G271 in the genomic DNA of rice plants.

The instant specification fails to provide guidance for the size of the band associated with the Owarihatamochi allele and for the restriction enzyme(s) used in its detection. Without access to the Owarihatamochi and Nipponbare rice varieties, and given the unpredictability of recreating these varieties, one of skill in the art could not determine what the Owarihatamochi allele of the G271 marker is, and thus could not practice the invention.

Given the claim breadth, unpredictability, and lack of guidance as discussed above, undue experimentation would have been required by one skilled in the art to develop and evaluate methods for identifying field resistance in rice and for breeding rice with field resistance.

The claims can be enabled by deposit of the Owarihatamochi and Nipponbare rice varieties. Since the rice varieties are essential to the claimed invention, they must be obtainable by a repeatable method set forth in the specification or otherwise be readily available to the public. If the rice varieties are not so obtainable or available, a deposit of said rice varieties may satisfy the requirements of 35 USC 112. The specification does not disclose a repeatable process to obtain the rice varieties and it is not apparent if the rice varieties are readily available to the public. Thus, a deposit is required for enablement purposes.

If the deposit is made under the terms of the Budapest Treaty, then an affidavit or declaration by Applicant, or a statement by an attorney of record over his or her signature and registration number, stating that the specific rice varieties have been deposited under the Budapest Treaty and that the rice varieties will be irrevocably and without restriction or condition released to the public upon the issuance of a patent, would satisfy the deposit requirement made herein.

If the deposit has not been made under the Budapest Treaty, then in order to certify that the deposit meets the criteria set forth in 37 C.F.R. 1.801-1.809, Applicant may provide assurance of compliance by an affidavit or declaration, or by a statement by an attorney of record over his or her signature and registration number, showing that

- (a) during the pendency of this application, access to the invention will be afforded to the Commissioner upon request;
- (b) all restrictions upon availability to the public will be irrevocably removed upon granting of the patent;
- (c) the deposit will be maintained in a public depository for a period of 30 years or 5 years after the last request or for the enforceable life of the patent, whichever is longer;
- (d) a test of the viability of the biological material at the time of deposit (sec 37 CFR 1.807); and,
- (e) the deposit will be replaced if it should ever become inviable.

In addition, the identifying information set forth in 37 CFR 1.809(d) should be added to the specification. See 37 CFR 1.801 - 1.809 [MPEP 2401-2411.05] for additional explanation of these requirements.

4. Claims 1, 4 and 7 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter that Applicant regards as the invention. The rejections are new, due to amendment of the claims.

Claim 1, lines 4-5 and 6-7, claim 4, lines 7 and 9-10, and claim 7, lines 7-8 and 9-10, are indefinite in their recitation of “the presence … of the Owarihatamochi allele of the DNA marker G271”. As the specification does not teach the size of the band associated with the Owarihatamochi allele or the restriction enzyme(s) used in its detection, one would not know what this allele is.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

5. Claim 1 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by the Rice Genome Research Program, <ftp://rgp.dna.affrc.go.jp/pub/japonicarice/tableall.txt>, September 1996. The rejection is repeated for the reasons of record as set forth in the Office action mailed 17 July 2003, as applied to claim 4. Applicant’s arguments filed 11 September 2003 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive.

Applicant urges that the website only describes identification of RFLPs in the rice genome and does not teach or suggest determining the presence or absence of field resistance to rice blast or that the Owarihatamochi allele of the G271 marker was associated with field resistance (response pg 4-5).

This is not found persuasive because determining the presence or absence of the Owarihatamochi allele of the G271 marker inherently determines the presence or absence of field resistance to rice blast. Furthermore, it is not clear that none of the multitude of rice varieties cited in the website do not have the Owarihatamochi allele of the G271 marker.

6. Claims 4 and 7 are free of the art, given the failure of the prior art to teach or suggest a method of rice breeding using G271.

Conclusion

7. Applicant's amendment necessitated the new ground(s) of rejection presented in this Office action. Accordingly, **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL**. See MPEP § 706.07(a). Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the date of this final action.

8. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Anne R. Kubelik, whose telephone number is (703) 308-5059. The examiner can normally be reached Monday through Friday, 8:30 am - 5:00 pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Amy Nelson, can be reached at (703) 306-3218. The fax phone numbers for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned are (703) 872-9306 for regular communications and (703) 872-9307 for After Final communications.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to Customer Service at (703) 308-0198.

Anne R. Kubelik, Ph.D.
October 9, 2003



AMY J. NELSON, PH.D.
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER
TECHNOLOGY CENTER 1600